

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in the current application. Claims 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 15, 17, and 19 are canceled. Claims 1, 3, 4, 9, 11, 12, and 14 are amended.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Schwenkler (US 3,210,875, hereinafter Schwenkler).

See remarks under the “Allowable Subject Matter” section.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7, 17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schwenkler in view of Bohm et al. (US 6,318,797, hereinafter Brohm).

See remarks under the “Allowable Subject Matter” section.

Allowable Subject Matter

On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that claims 2, 4, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16 and 18 are objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As amended, claim 1 incorporates the limitations of the previously presented claim 2. Therefore, the Applicant's submit that claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

As amended, claim 3 incorporates the limitations of the previously presented claims 1, 3, and 4. Therefore, the Applicant's submit that claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

Claims 4-19 depend on either claims 1 or 3. As such, these claims should also be in condition for allowance.

The Applicants note that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejections are now moot in light of the present amendments. This does not imply that the Applicant's agree with the Examiner's allegation that the previously presented claims were anticipated or rendered obvious by the above references, rather, the claims are amended to advance prosecution.

For the reasons stated above, the Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejections of claims 1 and 3-19 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

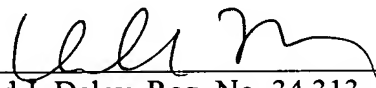
Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections and allowance of each of claims 1-19 in connection with the present application is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Donald J. Daley at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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